

**CITY OF LODI  
INFORMAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING  
"SHIRTSLEEVE" SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2003**

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, December 16, 2003, commencing at 7:00 a.m.

**A. ROLL CALL**

Present: Council Members – Beckman, Hitchcock, Howard, Land, and Mayor Hansen

Absent: Council Members – None

Also Present: City Manager Flynn, City Attorney Hays, and City Clerk Blackston

**B. CITY COUNCIL CALENDAR UPDATE**

City Clerk Blackston reviewed the weekly calendar (filed).

**C. TOPIC(S)**

C-1 "Discussion regarding Public Benefits Program grant for the Lodi Next Generation Home Project"

Rob Lechner, Manager of Customer Service and Programs, stated that the Lodi Next Generation Home Project would be funded through the City's Public Benefits Program. He introduced members of the audience including property owner Gary Buzunis, Gary Heedirik with Energy Doctor, and J.P. Batmale with the Great Valley Center. He explained that the concept of the project is to lease or rent a home in Lodi and retrofit it with state-of-the-art energy efficiency products and materials, e.g. wall and attic insulation, EnergyStar appliances and electronic products, ceiling fans, fluorescent lighting, sky lighting, dual paned windows, solar panels and hot water heating, grey water systems, heating and air conditioning with 18 SEER (Season Energy Efficiency Rating) or greater, low-flow toilets and shower heads, faucet aerators, drip irrigation, and drought tolerant plants. Staff plans on opening the home to students (fourth grade and higher), the San Joaquin Delta College HVAC and Mechanical class, homeowners, renters, developers, and general contractors.

Mr. Lechner noted that the Public Benefits Program would not fully fund the project and in-kind contributions will be solicited from mechanical contractors, home furnishing stores, appliance dealers, and landscape professionals. The house at 840 South Church Street is approximately 60 years old, has three bedrooms, and is 1,800 square feet. One of the bedrooms will be used as a conference room. It will be open from 8:00 to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and two or three Saturdays each month from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. The rent will be \$1,500 per month paid for through the Public Benefits Program budget. Of the \$125,000 from the Public Benefits Program, approximately \$50,000 would be expended during the 27-month project from January 2004 to March 2006. He estimated the cost of utilities, cable, and phone lines at \$50,000. The contract for Energy Doctor is \$20,000 and the balance of \$55,000 would be used for energy efficiency improvements. Mr. Lechner reported that the Great Valley Center has assured Electric Utility of a \$5,000 grant toward the project.

Council Member Howard asked if residents surrounding the home had been notified of the proposed project, to which Mr. Lechner replied that they had not. Ms. Howard and Council Member Land emphasized the importance of notifying the neighbors and mentioned that there may be impacts such as school buses and parking to be considered.

Mr. Lechner replied that school buses would be parked only for a limited time to drop off and pick up the students. He mentioned that it is planned to have the capability to charge the two vehicles that he and Kathy Brown, Programs Coordinator with Electric Utility, utilize for City business. He reported that after the term of the lease the property reverts back to the owner. The home will be modified to meet all Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

In reply to Mayor Hansen, Mr. Lechner reported that once the project term has ended all the equipment that is not permanently affixed to the home would be removed. He hoped to have all the energy efficiency improvements made to the home by April 1. In order for it to be designated as a demonstration house, Mr. Lechner's office would be established at the property.

Mayor Pro Tempore Beckman pointed out that Mr. Buzuniz would be getting a lot of improvements done on his property that he would be able to keep once the project ends. He asked whether this would be an offset to the rent payments. In addition he asked to be provided with the specific dollar amount for the permanent improvements to the property and how that would translate into real equity value.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Mr. Buzuniz described the process he went through to locate a home which met Electric Utility's specifications. He reported that with the rent amount of \$1,500, he would lose \$355 a month after taking into account the mortgage payment, taxes, insurance, and interest rate as owner non-occupied.

Mayor Hansen also asked that Council be provided with a financial accounting of all projected expenses, the value of permanent improvements to the home, etc.

Mr. Lechner commented that as of November 30 the Public Benefits Program had a balance of \$644,000.

- Kathy Grant preferred that it be a long-term project and the house be purchased by the City instead of rented. She asked whether there would be measurement of how much the utility bill decreased each month after the improvements were made to the home, to which Mr. Lechner answered in the affirmative. She recommended that the project also include retrofit for storm water runoff, water meters, and landscaping engineered to be less impervious.

In response to Mayor Hansen, Mr. Lechner reported that the proposed contract includes a lease option on the house for one additional year. He mentioned that staff hopes to have another piece of property lined up for a similar project in 2006.

- Joe Pachino stated that he moved to Lodi about a year ago from Chicago where he owned 82 rental homes. He recently retired and was formerly an architectural designer. He mentioned that he would like to approach Council in the future regarding an elderly assisted living project, which he believed would pay for itself through state and federal grants. Mr. Pachino and his associates have been working on a new pop-up gutter system that expends water over structures when a fire exists or is in close proximity. He suggested that this be incorporated into the project Council is now considering and he offered his services.
- Gary Heedirik of Energy Doctor noted that education is a primary component of the Public Benefits Program. He stated that the Program has provided rebates for various items, though it was recently discovered to offer very little benefit. He explained that there is an order in which improvements should be done based on the existing condition of a house and the consumer's need. The concept behind the House-as-a-System Home Inspection is to identify that order for homeowners. He proposed that, if this project proves to be successful, the City purchase a house and retrofit it every two years.

In reference to Ms. Grant's earlier recommendation, Mr. Lechner stated that staff's intent is to work closely with the City water conservation team to address landscaping and associated issues, which will be included as part of the project. He also indicated that before and after utility usage measurements will be conducted and available to interested persons.

Mayor Hansen suggested that a public hearing be held on this matter to allow surrounding residents to voice their concerns and input regarding the project.

Council Member Land recommended that a specific notice be mailed to property owners within a 300-foot radius surrounding the project to determine interest prior to scheduling a public hearing.

City Manager Flynn commented that it might be a good idea to present the project to the Planning Commission before bringing it back to Council.

**D. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**E. ADJOURNMENT**

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 a.m.

ATTEST:

Susan J. Blackston  
City Clerk